

2014-15 Statewide Dual Credit Initiative Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS	
QUESTION	ANSWER
1) What is the statewide dual credit initiative?	The statewide dual credit initiative provides academically challenging, high school courses that are aligned to postsecondary standards. Student who pass the course challenge exam earn credit that can be applied to any public postsecondary institution in Tennessee. Tennessee high school and college faculty worked together to develop the learning objectives and challenge exam for each course.
2) What is a local dual credit course?	Local dual credit opportunities also provide academically challenging, high school courses that are aligned to postsecondary standards. However, a local dual credit course is provided through a partnership with an individual postsecondary institution, and students earn credit through an assessment that is developed and/or approved specifically for credit at that institution.
3) Can my school offer both statewide and local dual credit?	Yes. Both types of dual credit courses help to expand the portfolio of early postsecondary opportunities available to Tennessee students. Statewide dual credit courses do not alter or replace existing local dual credit agreements between a school district and postsecondary institution(s).
4) What courses are available as part of the statewide dual credit pilot?	The following courses will be available during the 2015-16 school year: College Algebra, Statistics, Sociology, Criminal Justice I, Health Information Technology, Agriculture Business Finance, and Greenhouse Management.
5) Can statewide dual credit courses be weighted differently when calculating a student's GPA?	Yes. The state's Uniform Grading Policy provides guidelines for weighting student grades in statewide dual credit courses (an additional four percentage points can be used).

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PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS	
QUESTION	ANSWER
1) How can my school offer a statewide dual credit course?	Schools must complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tennessee Department of Education for each statewide dual credit course they plan to offer in a specific academic year.
2) Who is eligible to teach a statewide dual credit course?	All statewide dual credit teachers are required to attend training specific to their course prior to the start of the school year. The structure of each training session will vary depending on the course, as well as the teacher's previous statewide dual credit experience.
3) Are there other requirements for teachers?	Yes. Statewide dual credit teachers are responsible for meeting all deadlines and requirements for the pilot. Teachers will need to maintain communication with the Office of Postsecondary Coordination and Alignment and work closely with their pilot coordinator.
4) Are there specific guidelines for student placement?	Yes. Prior academic performance, ability, and interest should be used to inform student placement decisions. First year results show a correlation between student performance on state assessments and success on the College Algebra challenge exam.

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CHALLENGE EXAM ADMINISTRATION	
QUESTION	ANSWER
1) Are all students required to take the challenge exam?	Yes. All students enrolled in a statewide dual credit course are required to take a challenge exam to determine subject mastery.
2) How are the challenge exams administered?	The challenge exams are administered through an online assessment platform operated by the Tennessee Board of Regents.
3) When will students take the exams?	Students sit for the exam at the end of the course. Fall semester courses test in December, while spring and year-long courses test in May each year. The pilot teacher selects a specific exam date and time for each class. A make-up test window is provided to accommodate student with an excused absence during the original exam period.
4) Where will students take the practice test and challenge exam?	Schools and/or districts select a location that will meet the exam administration and technology requirements. All exams are administered online.
5) Are there specific technology requirements to run the exam?	Yes. High schools are required to install Google Chrome or Firefox on each computer prior to the exam being administered. The students should use Chrome or Firefox (not Internet Explorer) when opening the internet to begin the course. The Flash plug-in must be installed in order to use Firefox.
6) Is on-site technical assistance available during the administration of the exam?	Pilot coordinators receive training so that they can help teachers with the technology and exam administration. Help-desk support from the Tennessee Board of Regents is also provided for specific issues. All technology should be tested prior to exam administration.
7) Can students take a challenge exam more than once?	No. Students ONLY have one attempt at these exams. Any additional attempts will not be reported and/or recognized by the Tennessee Department of Education.
8) Are teachers who teach the class allowed to administer and/or proctor the exam?	The course teacher may be in the room during the exam administration (not required), but an additional proctor must also observe the administration of the challenge exam.

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COURSE AND EXAM OUTCOMES	
QUESTION	ANSWER
1) How do students earn credit through the statewide dual credit courses?	Students who meet or exceed the established cut score on the challenge exam earn credit that can be applied toward any public postsecondary institution in the state.
2) Which postsecondary institutions award credit based on challenge exam scores?	All Tennessee public postsecondary institutions (Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee schools) award credit based on the statewide dual credit exams. Private institutions will determine whether or not to award postsecondary credit on an individual basis.
3) Does the exam score impact the student's grade in the course?	It is a local decision whether or not to include the challenge exam as part of students overall grade for the course.
4) Why is the statewide dual credit exam score reported on the high school transcript?	Challenge exam scores are reported on high school transcripts for the purpose of awarding credit at the postsecondary level. The scores are listed with other test scores, such as ACT and EOC exams, and are not linked to the course itself. The score is reported as a number and pass/fail status is not indicated on the transcript.
5) Will a low exam score negatively impact a student's postsecondary application?	No. The exam score will not negatively impact a student. Enrollment in the course is seen as a positive reflection of academic rigor, and the score is only used as a way to accurately award postsecondary credit.